

# ELEMENT FOUR

## UNIVERSAL ACCESS (29 CFR 37.54(d)(1)(v)) (29 CFR 37.42)

*Washington State addresses how it and its recipients are complying with and will continue to comply with the requirements of 29 CFR 37.42 relating to the provision of universal access to programs and activities.*

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### ONE-STOP CENTERS

#### Background

Through a \$9 million grant from the United States Department of Labor, Washington State began developing its One-Stop Career Center System prior to the WIA law being signed. The core elements of the system were customer focus, integration of services, universality of access to the system, and a strong accountability for the outcomes of the system. The One-Stop system was designed by a multitude of partners at both the state and local level with oversight by the Executive Policy Council (EPC). The EPC also required One-Stop partners to take into account the needs of the target populations, including, at a minimum, dislocated workers, veterans, migrant and seasonal farmworkers, disadvantaged adults and youth, job seekers with disabilities, older workers, and welfare recipients seeking employment. See Attachment 4A-1, pages 1, 6 and 9.

The planning and decision-making process in the development of One-Stop Centers laid much of the groundwork for what is now known as WorkSource Washington. During the implementation of WIA, planning directions were sent to the chief local elected officials. They were told to include an assessment of current and future employment opportunities and skills needs, current and future workforces, current workforce development systems, goals, objectives and strategies. Universal services for WIA Title I-B and other Title I-B funded employment and training services to youth, adults, and dislocated workers were also a requirement to be included in the plan. See Attachment 4A-2, pages 1, 2 and 4 only.

WorkSource Washington's electronic one-stop workforce system has been developed to reach out universally to all individuals interested in employment and training services. It is a customer service network designed to assist a broad range of job seekers and employers. The web site address is [www.go2worksource.com](http://www.go2worksource.com), which includes EO tagline language. Efforts to ensure the inclusion of the EO tagline language in all official web sites, job announcements, brochures and advertisements continue. See Element 2 for sample publications. Individuals are able to place their resumes on the web site for employers' review; request referrals to job openings that are listed; obtain information

from classified ads, government jobs, company web sites, and America's Job Bank; and obtain information about apprenticeship programs and Labor Market information. The site, which can be accessed any time, offers opportunities for targeted populations to utilize and benefit from WIA services. (Attachment 4B-1 and 4B-2)

From this web site, individuals may also access services that are available locally by clicking on the link to Local Connections. This allows users to find out the name of their local Workforce Development Councils and the WorkSource and/or affiliate sites that operate within their area. Outreach efforts which encourage participation by all segments of the population that may be eligible for services are evident through these web sites. Most of these web sites are Bobby-approved and contain links to disability information for both job seekers and employers; many are available in languages other than English and in alternate formats, where applicable. These sites provide notice of employment and training opportunities, upcoming job fairs, and workshops and an orientation video. Links to other partner services help publicize services available to everyone. See web site examples in Attachments 4B-3, 4B-4 and 4B-5.

Where bilingual media is available and its use is appropriate, this resource will also be utilized to reach those who may not know about and/or have access to services. WDCs have been made aware of their obligation to provide appropriate language assistance to individuals with limited English proficiency in order to ensure meaningful access to programs and services, in accordance with DOL policy guidance. An LEP Committee has been formed to address DOL's interpretive policy guidance. See Element 2.

TTY/TDDs and the 1-800 relay service are available in offices to help ensure communication for all.

Service and training providers are co-located at the WorkSource Centers and affiliate sites across the state. This enables workforce customers to have access without having to go to another physical site to secure services. Customers are able to access services through self-service, staff-assisted service, workshops and training classes, and one-on-one staff-directed services. The levels of services are based on the needs of the customer. The criteria for priority of services for the various programs are provided in a nondiscriminatory manner. Staff at the state level has communicated to the WDCs their obligation to provide universal access and to include members of both sexes, members of various racial and ethnic groups, and members of various age groups, as well as individuals with disabilities. The WDCs were instructed to incorporate them in their WIA Operations and Strategic Plans, and they have done so. (Attachments 4A-2 and Section Two of 4C-1 and 4C-2)

In addition, Toby Olson, Executive Secretary of the Governor's Committee on Disability Issues and Employment (GCDE), is working in conjunction with the department and its partners to ensure universal access and training for persons with disabilities. The GCDE is the information clearinghouse for use by persons of disability and governmental and private employees. (Attachment 4E, RCW 50.12.250) Mr. Olson is also the Executive Secretary of the Northwest Disabilities Business Technical

Assistance Center, which provides assistance to Washington, Idaho, Oregon and Alaska.

Within the WorkSource Centers, customers are provided with general unemployment insurance information, WorkSource assistance, and help with the use of self-service telephones. Assistance is also provided to UI claimants in developing training plans and conducting job search reviews, as well as to clients with special service needs.

In addition, the Unemployment Insurance Program has moved to a Claims TeleCenter for initial claims and adjudication of issues. Claimants call a local or toll-free telephone number and are connected with an automated call distribution function that identifies the reason for the call, determines what language the caller speaks, and routes the call to an agent for assistance.

All staff members who work in the TeleCenter participate in an intensive training program. Components include information about the way services are provided to persons who need language assistance. The forms and scripts used to file claims have been created to eliminate “jargon” that was part of the UI program for so long. Staff members know how to use the third party translator’s services, as well as the TDD devices in each office. Calls can be routed through the state regardless of the caller’s physical location so that wait times for customers are reduced and people needing language assistance, including TDD, are routed to the appropriate agent. Each TeleCenter has TDD equipment and several staff members in each office are trained in its use.

A claimant who needs language assistance is interviewed by a bilingual staff member who speaks the claimant’s language, or he/she will be connected with a language line interpreter for assistance with the interview. In order to meet the demand of our customers, the agency continues to recruit additional bilingual staff. Claimants can receive free oral interpretation of any and all documents related to UI at any time. In addition, instructions are provided on filing weekly claims in Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Vietnamese. The LEP Committee will be identifying needs to provide any further written translations and/or bilingual staff.

UI claims can be filed on the Internet at [go2ui.com](http://go2ui.com). This function is available in English and Spanish. Many forms, most of which are available in English and Spanish, can be downloaded. The weekly claiming instructions can be downloaded from the Internet in English, Spanish, Russian, Chinese, and Vietnamese.

Information about filing appeals of decisions made on unemployment claims is provided by the Office of Administrative Hearings (OAH), which is a separate state agency. OAH’s booklet, “How to Prepare and Present your Case,” is available in thirteen (13) languages: English, Spanish, Vietnamese, Russian, Chinese, Tagalog, Korean, Hungarian, Laotian, Polish, Amharic, Thai, and Cambodian. OAH also provides interpreters for any language free of charge to those requesting language assistance.

## **Outreach and Recruitment**

Efforts to provide services to a substantial segment of the population are based on census data, labor market analysis, service need assessments, other community and social service organizations, educational institutions, employers, labor and community service advocates. The WDCs are made up of representatives of public and private agencies, educators, employers, and community-based organizations that provide services to the disadvantaged, underserved, underemployed and targeted groups within their communities. They share a mutual interest in improving employment opportunities to meet the needs of employers and in improving the economic conditions in the community. Through the development of the local strategic plans, new cooperative efforts were established for all the partners in the workforce development system. Improvements in communications were made with the business sector and economic development organizations. Better collaborations from these new relationships have created a proactive environment for a stronger workforce development system.

Ongoing activities will continue to broaden the composition of those considered for participation in programs and activities. A sample document used to determine demographic information relative to priority is in Element 7, Attachment 7D. Other samples documenting demographic information can be found in the attached local area Strategic Plan for North Central Washington/Columbia Basin WDA. The Plan includes samples of data such as Current and Future Workforce; School Dropout Rates; Percent of Population by Gender, Race, and Hispanic Origin; State and County Population by Age; Public/Private School Enrollment by Race/Ethnic Origin; Persons with Disability Status; People of All Ages in Poverty and other data used by the WDC to help determine program priorities and provide universal access for all. See Attachment 4C-1.

Recipients continue to encourage their service providers and their contractors to extend outreach to broaden the composition of those considered for participation in their programs. Attached are two examples of outreach and enrollments from two contractors of the Yakima Workforce Development Area that focus on providing services to youth. Their outreach plans include public service announcements on community television and radio stations, as well as advertisements in the Spanish language and bilingual media. In addition, outreach and promotional efforts include a campaign to recruit individuals with disabilities. See Attachments 4D-1 and 4D-2.

The UI program instituted an outreach program to publicize the services offered. This outreach is aimed at reaching customers in various communities throughout the state that may be isolated from UI services due to language barriers. This outreach is done face-to-face, through print and radio media, and through third parties, such as community-based organizations.

Publications for unemployment are available in several languages and plans are underway to translate additional documents as they are updated. EO tagline language will continue to be included on those documents provided.

## **Monitoring**

**W**DCs continue to monitor who is being served by comparing the local labor market information for the population to be served with data from their reports showing the characteristics of their participants: i.e., members of both sexes, various racial and ethnic groups, individuals with disabilities, and individuals in differing age groups. They are working with their partners and community organizations to share information, provide job fairs, and ensure they continue to focus on providing outreach to target various populations.

To ensure that equitable services are provided to all segments of our population, a staff person in the UI Policy Unit is assigned the responsibility of regular monitoring of EO reports, use of third party interpreters, and customer satisfaction surveys. The person in this position reports to the Washington Management Service Policy Lead. Copies of the EO reports are provided to the State EO Officer. See Element 1. Calls to claimants who need language assistance are monitored to ensure they receive accurate information. This is used as a training tool for staff and for monitoring the quality of our contract interpreters.

The efforts demonstrated by ESD and its recipients to broaden the representation of persons for participation and employment is monitored and evaluated by the State/ESD EO Officer on an ongoing basis through on-site compliance reviews. See Element 7.

# Documentation

## Attachments for Element Four

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- 4A 1-Washington's One-Stop Career Center System Decisions  
2-Local Workforce Development Council Formation and Certification
- 4B 1-WorkSource Washington Web Site Home Page  
2-Apprenticeship Web Site Home Page/WorkSource Washington  
3-WorkSource Spokane (Tagline, Contractor Tagline, Disability, Languages)  
4-WorkSource Bellevue (Taglines/Employer Links/Partners/Disability)  
5-SkillSource Wenatchee (Partners/Languages)
- 4C 1-North Central Washington/Columbia Basin Five Year Strategic Plan  
2-Olympic Workforce Development Council Strategic Plan
- 4D 1-YVOIC Outreach and Enrollment  
2-NCAC Outreach and Enrollment
- 4E RCW 50.12.250 Information clearinghouse to assist in employment of persons of disability